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Senate Panel Backs Farkas As U.S. Envoy

Associated Press

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee gave its consent yesterday to President Nixon's nomination of Ruth L. Farkas to be ambassador to Luxembourg. She and her husband pledged \$300,000 to Nixon's re-election campaign.

The committee deferred action on the promotion of James A. May, a foreign service officer who has been criticized for allegedly failing to report information about the March 1968 My Lai massacre to the State Department and Central Intelligence Agency.

Ten days ago, the committee held up action on the nomination of Mrs. Farkas after disclosure that she and her husband, George Farkas, millionaire founder of the Alexander's department-store chain in New York, gave nearly \$200,000 of its contributions to Nixon campaign committees after the November election.

Sen. Gale McGee, D-Wyo., who originally recommended that a committee vote be postponed, said a General Accounting Office audit confirmed Mrs. Farkas' testimony that a \$300,000 campaign pledge was made before the election. He said he was satisfied that the post-election payments merely satisfied that commitment.

"Whoever accepted the money is still unidentified," McGee said, "and should be nominated for the 'greed of the year' award."

The committee chairman, Sen. J. W. Fulbright (D-Ark.) who said he cast the lone dissenting vote against the nomination at the closed-door session, told reporters: "I don't believe in paying this kind of money for these appointments. It is demeaning of the office."

Fulbright said action on May's promotion to Class 2 foreign-service officer was deferred to give committee members time to study an 82-page report by a State Department panel that reviewed a House armed-services subcommittee's 1970 findings of an apparent My Lai coverup by military and State Department personnel, including May, in Vietnam's Quang Ngai Province.